

April 2009

Overview of California's 2008-09 Accountability Progress Reporting System

This overview provides summary information designed to assist accountability coordinators, management staff, and boards of education at local educational agencies (LEAs) in understanding academic accountability requirements in California.

California's comprehensive accountability system monitors the academic achievement of all the state's public schools, including charter schools, and LEAs that serve students in kindergarten through grade twelve. (An LEA is a school district or a county office of education.) This accountability system is based on state requirements, established by the Public Schools Accountability Act (PSAA) of 1999, and on federal requirements, established by the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001.

Accountability Progress Reporting

The California Department of Education (CDE) reports both state and federal accountability results under the general heading of the "Accountability Progress Reporting" (APR) system. The table below shows the reports included in APR for 2008-09. State-required reports include Base and Growth Academic Performance Index (API) results. Federal-required reports include Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and Program Improvement (PI) results. The reports are located on the CDE APR Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/apr/>.

2008-09 APR System

State Accountability Requirements	Federal Accountability Requirements
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ 2008 Base API Report (release April 2009)■ 2009 Growth API Report (release August 2009)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ 2009 AYP Report (release August 2009)■ 2009-10 PI Report (release August 2009)

State Accountability Requirements

State results focus on how much schools are improving academically from year-to-year, based on results of statewide testing. The API is the cornerstone of the state's academic accountability requirements. Its purpose is to measure the academic performance and

growth of schools. Each school has unique API growth targets (described on page 3).

Test Results Used in the API

California's accountability system measures the performance and progress of a school or LEA based on results of statewide tests at grades two through twelve. A school's API is a composite number representing the results of these tests. The left column of the chart at the bottom of page 2 shows the content areas and grade levels of the tests used in the API.

Relative Emphases of Tests Used in the API

The test results used in calculating a school's API have different relative emphases. The amount of emphasis each content area has in the API for a particular school or LEA (called the content area weights) is determined by statewide test weights and by the number of students taking each type of test. The following table shows the relative emphases of different content areas in the API for the most common school types.

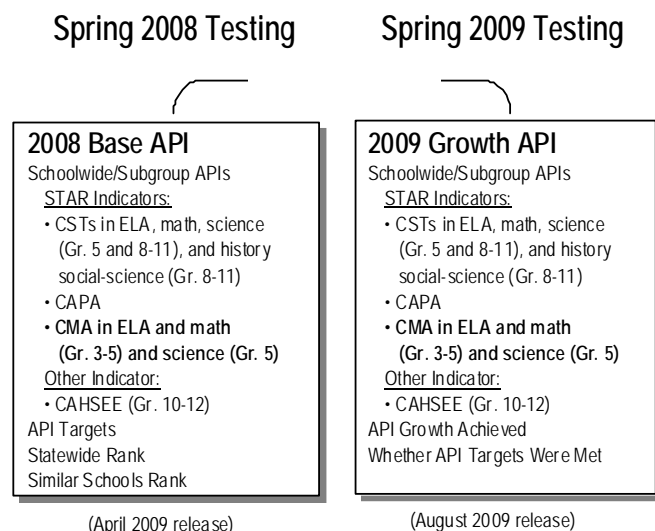
School Content Area Weights for the Most Common Grade Spans, 2008-09 API

Content Areas	K-5	6-8	9-12
CSTs, CMA, and CAPA			
English-Language Arts	56%	52%	27%
Mathematics	38%	34%	18%
Science	6%	7%	23%
History-Social Science		7%	14%
CAHSEE			
English-Language Arts			9%
Mathematics			9%

Note: Assumes an equal number of student test results at each grade level and no missing data.

Base and Growth APIs

The API is a numeric index (or scale) ranging from 200 to 1000. Schools receive state-required accountability information in API reports. In order to allow for phase-in of new indicators, each annual API reporting cycle includes a Base and a Growth API. The Base API starts the reporting cycle and is released approximately a year after testing. For example, the 2008 Base is calculated from results of statewide testing in spring 2008 but is released in April 2009. The Growth API, released after the Base API, is calculated in exactly the same fashion and with the same indicators as the prior year Base API but from test results of the following year. For example, the 2009 Growth is calculated from results of statewide testing in spring 2009 and is released in August 2009. **The year of the API corresponds to the year of testing:**



API Reporting Cycles

The graphic on the left shows the 2008-09 API reporting cycle. The indicators are the same for the Base and Growth APIs, but the 2008 Base includes 2008 test results whereas the 2009 Growth includes 2009 test results. The 2008 Base API is subtracted from the 2009 Growth API to show how much a school's API changed from 2008 to 2009 (referred to as 2008-09 API growth). This determines whether a school meets its API growth target. The Base API Report includes the Base API, targets, and ranks. The Growth API Report includes the Growth API, growth achieved, and whether or not targets were met. Detailed information about the API calculation is provided in the *2008-09 Academic Performance Index Reports Information Guide* and in the "Calculation Spreadsheets Base and Growth," which allow users to estimate the APIs of their schools. These documents are located on the CDE API Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/api/>.

State Test Results Used in API and AYP Calculations

Academic Performance Index (API)	Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)
California Standards Tests (CSTs)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English-language arts, mathematics, history-social science, and science Grades two through eleven 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English-language arts and mathematics Grades two through eight
California Modified Assessment (CMA)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English-language arts and mathematics Grades three through five 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English-language arts and mathematics Grades three through five
California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English-language arts and mathematics Grades two through eleven 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English-language arts and mathematics Grades two through eight and ten
California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English-language arts and mathematics Grade ten (and eleven and twelve if the student passed) Passed = score of 350 or above 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English-language arts and mathematics Grade ten Proficient = score of 380 or above

Notes: More information about these tests is located on the CDE Testing Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/>. The CSTs, CMA, CAPA, and CAHSEE are aligned to state-adopted standards, which describe the knowledge and skills that students should master at each grade level. The CMA is based on modified achievement standards and was developed in response to federal regulations. The CAPA is a standards-based test for students with significant cognitive disabilities who are unable to take the CSTs, even with accommodations or modifications. The CSTs in history-social science are only included for grades eight through eleven. The CSTs in science are only included at grades five and eight through eleven, which include the CSTs in science at grades five, eight, and ten (life science) that were developed to meet federal NCLB requirements.

API Growth Targets

State API growth targets are set for each school as a whole and for each numerically significant subgroup in the school. (Subgroups are defined on page 4.) The annual growth target for a school or subgroup is defined as follows:

- If the school's or subgroup's Base API is between 200 and 690, the growth target is five percent of the difference between its Base API and the statewide performance target of 800.
- If the school's or subgroup's Base API is between 691 and 795, the growth target is a gain of five points.
- If the school's or subgroup's Base API is between 796 and 799, the growth target is the following:
 - API of 796 – a gain of four points
 - API of 797 – a gain of three points
 - API of 798 – a gain of two points
 - API of 799 – a gain of one point
- If the school's or subgroup's Base API is 800 or more, the school or subgroup must maintain an API of at least 800.

LEAs and schools in the Alternative Schools Accountability Model (ASAM) receive APIs but do not receive API targets.

API Ranks

API ranks are provided in the Base API reports. Schools are ranked in ten categories of equal size, called deciles, from 10 (highest) to 1 (lowest). A school's **statewide** rank compares its API to the APIs of all other schools statewide of the same type (elementary, middle, or high school). A school's **similar schools rank** compares its API to the APIs of 100 other schools of the same type that have similar opportunities and challenges.

Statewide Similar Schools API Ranks

Statewide Ranks	Similar Schools Ranks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Calculated separately by school type (elementary, middle, or high school) ■ School's API compared to all other schools in the state of the same type 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Calculated separately by school type (elementary, middle, or high school) ■ School's API compared to 100 other schools of the same type that have similar opportunities and challenges

LEAs and schools in the ASAM do not receive API ranks. A small school with between 11 and 99 valid scores receives an API and a statewide rank with an asterisk but no similar schools rank. (Asterisks denote APIs and ranks that are based on small numbers of test results. These APIs and ranks are less reliable and, therefore, should be carefully interpreted.)

How State API Results are Used

The API is used in meeting state requirements under the PSAA and federal AYP requirements under NCLB. Under state requirements, if a school meets certain API participation and growth criteria, it may be eligible to become a California Distinguished School, National Blue Ribbon School, or Title I Academic Achievement Awards School. If a school does not meet or exceed its growth targets and is ranked in the lower part of the statewide distribution of the Base API, it may be identified for participation in state intervention programs, which are designed to help the school improve its academic performance. Under federal NCLB requirements, the API is one of the indicators for AYP.

Federal Accountability Requirements

Federal results are reported in August and focus on how well schools and LEAs are meeting common standards of academic performance. The ultimate objective for schools and LEAs under NCLB is for 100 percent of students to achieve proficiency in English-language arts and mathematics by 2013-14.

Federal AYP

Federal results are reported in terms of how well schools and LEAs meet AYP criteria (also referred to as AYP targets). NCLB requires that all schools or LEAs of the same type meet the same academic targets throughout the state, regardless of their baseline levels of performance. The AYP targets increase until 2013-14 when all schools and LEAs must have 100 percent of their students performing at the proficient level or above on statewide tests.

Test Results Used in AYP

The statewide test results used in AYP calculations differ from the results used in API calculations. The right column of the chart at the bottom of page 2 shows the content areas and grade levels of the tests used in AYP calculations.

AYP Performance Targets

Each year, schools and LEAs must meet four sets of requirements to make AYP. The requirements reflect statewide performance levels and are the same for all schools and LEAs of the same type (see the table on page 4). The requirements include: (1) student participation rate on statewide tests; (2) percentage of students scoring at the proficient level or above in English-language arts and mathematics on statewide tests; (3) Growth API; and (4) graduation rate (if high school students are enrolled). Numerically significant subgroups at a school or LEA also must meet participation rate and percent proficient requirements.

Statewide AYP Requirements for 2008-09 School Year

Type of School or LEA	Participation Rate*	Percent Proficient in English-Language Arts*	Percent Proficient in Mathematics*	API Growth	Graduation Rate (if high school students enrolled)
Elementary Schools, Middle Schools, and Elementary School Districts	95%	46.0%	47.5%	650 or 1 point growth	N/A
High Schools and High School Districts (with grades 9-12)		44.5%	43.5%		83.1% or +0.1% one-year change
Unified School Districts, High School Districts, and County Offices of Education (with grades 2-8 and 9-12)		45.0%	45.5%		or +0.2% two-year change

* Numerically significant subgroups also must meet participation rate and percent proficient requirements.

These 2008-09 AYP requirements reflect increases from the prior year. AYP targets will continue to increase annually until 2014. A complete listing of all AYP targets for 2002 through 2014 are shown on pages 23 through 25 in the *2008 Adequate Yearly Progress Report Information Guide* on the CDE AYP Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ayp/>.

Federal PI

Federal accountability results, reported in August, also include information about whether a school or an LEA receiving federal Title I, Part A, Basic, funds has been identified for PI because it has not met AYP targets for two consecutive years within specific areas.

Schools and LEAs in PI must implement additional federal requirements. A school or an LEA is eligible to exit PI if it makes AYP for two consecutive years. If a school or an LEA is identified for PI, it must provide certain types of required services and/or interventions. Information about PI reports and identification is located on the CDE AYP Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ayp/>. Information about PI required services and/or interventions is located on the CDE PI Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/ti/programimprov.asp>.

Subgroups for API and AYP

Subgroup results for API and AYP are calculated for the following categories:

- African American (not of Hispanic origin)
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Filipino
- Hispanic or Latino
- Pacific Islander
- White (not of Hispanic origin)
- Socioeconomically Disadvantaged
- English Learners
- Students with Disabilities

To be considered "numerically significant" for the API, a subgroup must have **either**: (1) at least 50 students with valid test scores who make up at least 15 percent of the total valid scores, or (2) at least 100 students with valid test scores.

In determining percent proficient calculations under AYP, the definition of numerical significance is the same as the API definition. However, in determining participation rate calculations under AYP, the definition is based on enrollment rather than the number of valid scores.

API Differs in State and Federal Criteria

The API is used in both state and federal target criteria, but the use of the API differs. Under state requirements, a school must increase its API score by 5 percent of the difference between the school API and 800 or maintain a score of 800 or above. To meet federal AYP criteria, a school or an LEA must have a minimum API or have at least one point growth in the schoolwide API. This is in addition to the other federal requirements (participation rate, percent proficient, and graduation rate if high school students are enrolled).

Federal Requirements for English Learners

NCLB also requires LEAs and Title III consortia that receive funds under Title III to meet targets for English learners. Those targets include making annual progress in learning English and demonstrating English language proficiency. The test used in California to measure English proficiency is the California English Language Development Test (CELDT). Separate from the AYP and PI reports, the Title III Accountability Report is released in September and provides results of how well LEAs and consortia met the Title III accountability targets.

Frequently Asked Questions

What measure is the most important—growth or performance?

Both measures are important for evaluating a school's academic achievement. The percentage of students' test scores at the proficient level or above is one important way to view the overall achievement of a school. At the same time, the growth measure also is important. API growth measures the change in academic achievement for students from one year to the next. Even a school with 90 percent or more of its students' scores at the proficient level or above has room for students to grow academically each year.

How can a school be high performing for the API and not make AYP?

Although a school could have high API growth and/or performance, it could fall short on participation rate, percent proficient, or graduation rate (if it enrolls high school students) and not make AYP. This is because criteria for API and AYP are different.

The API measures a school's composite academic growth from one year to the next. A school and its numerically significant subgroups must meet API growth targets (up to 11 criteria) annually.

AYP measures school performance differently. To meet AYP, a school and LEA as well as subgroups must meet established performance targets, annually.

How do the state content standards fit into accountability?

The State Board of Education (SBE) has adopted state content standards to encourage the highest achievement of every student, by defining the knowledge, concepts, and skills that students should acquire at each grade level. The API and AYP are calculated from the results of statewide testing that is aligned with those content standards.

How does the API model fit with federal AYP requirements?

The API functions as a catalyst for significant improvements in student achievement. In addition, federal AYP requirements provide incentives for schools and LEAs to strive toward increasing the numbers of students who reach proficiency. These combined goals are working to move California toward the elimination of achievement gaps between student subgroups.

How can high-performing schools still meet their growth targets year after year?

While it may seem more difficult for schools with a high percentage of students' scores at the proficient level or above to continue meeting growth expectations, it is

possible for them to do so. Even if all students in a school scored at the proficient level or above last year, those same students are challenged by new material the following year (in the next grade level). The growth measure inherently provides students with an opportunity to demonstrate growth as they learn new material.

What happens to low-performing schools?

There are a number of different state and federally funded programs and resources available to low-performing schools to assist them in their improvement efforts. Information about these programs can be found on the CDE High Priority/Interventions Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/lp/>.

Additional Information

The following CDE resources provide further information about the state and federal accountability system:

- **Testing** — <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/>
phone: 916-445-9441
e-mail: sad@cde.ca.gov
- **API** — <http://www.cde.ca.gov/api/>
phone: 916-319-0863
e-mail: aau@cde.ca.gov
- **AYP** — <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ayp/>
phone: 916-319-0863
e-mail: aau@cde.ca.gov
- **PI Identification** — <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ayp/>
phone: 916-319-0875
e-mail: evaluation@cde.ca.gov
- **PI Requirements** —
<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/ti/programimprov.asp>
phone: 916-319-0854
e-mail: pi@cde.ca.gov
- **Title III Accountability** —
<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/t3/>
phone: 916-319-0863
e-mail: amao@cde.ca.gov
- **ASAM** — <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/am/>
phone: 916-319-0875
e-mail: asam@cde.ca.gov
- **School/Teacher Recognition** —
<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/sr/>
phone: 916-319-0866
e-mail: awards@cde.ca.gov
- **High Priority/Interventions** —
<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/lp/>
phone: 916-319-0774